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大正御伽話

A TAISHO MAIDEN FAIRYTALE

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第18話
PERPLEXING MEMORY

AND...
LET'S GO TO TOKYO
I WILL DEFINITELY COME BACK WITH YUZU... TOGETHER.

...
TO GET YUZU....
WHERE ARE YOU GOING?
STEP

I'M GOING TOO!!
I KNEW IT.
I'M LEAVING THESE KIDS BEHIND
WHAT ARE YOU SAYING. OU CAN'T TAKE THESE KIDS TH YOU.
WHAT ...
I'M WORRIED ABOUT RYOTARO ...
SO PLEASE, LET ME GO WITH YOU.

EVER SINCE THE BIG EARTH-QUAKE IN THE MORNING, THERE HAVE BEEN SEVERAL AFTERSHOCKS ONE AFTER ANOTHER
EVEN OUR LITTLE VILLAGE IS IN CHAOS...
I CAN'T STOP THINKING HOW MUCH WORSE TOKYO MUST BE WITH ALL THOSE BUILDINGS AND PEOPLE...
IT'S HARD NOT TO BE NEGATIVE...
SHE'S THE SAME AS ME...
PLEASE, TAMAHIKO.

PLEASE, BOTCHAN! TAKE NEE-CHAN WITH YOU!
WE ARE WORRIED ABOUT RYOTARO NII-CHAN TOO!
RYOTARO NII-CHAN MUST BE ALONE AND SCARED.
HE'LL FEEL MUCH BETTER IF HE SEES NEE-CHAN.
BUT THEN HOW ARE YOU GUYS...
BOTCHAN!!

WOAA AAH
COME ON, JUST TAKE RYO NEE-CHAN WITH YOU!!
EVEN IF YOU SAY THAT...
UMMM
BOT CHAAAN
WE HAVE EVERYONE, SO WE'LL BE FINE.
YEAH, YEAH!
EE

MOST OF THE HOUSES ARE CRUMBLING OR BURNED
MANY PEOPLE ARE IN-JURED
AND THE HOSPITAL IS NO GOOD...
!
YOU KIDS SEEM OKAY, BUT HOW ABOUT THE REST OF YOUR FAMILY OR THE VILLAGES?

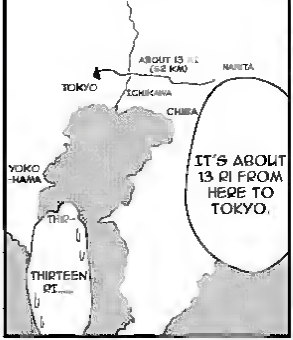
MY GRANDPA WILL HAVE TO SLEEP OUTSIDE EVEN THOUGH HE'S SICK...
....
THEN HOW ABOUT THIS
EVERYONE, GATHER THE VILLAGERS WHO LOST THEIR HOME OR FAMILY, AND TAKE REFUGE AT MY HOUSE.
EH
IT'S FINE, MY GRANDFATHER MADE SURE TO BUILD THE HOUSE EXTRA -STURDY.
I'LL BE GONE FOR A WHILE, SO USE IT.
EHHH.
YOU KIDS KNOW WHERE THINGS ARE STORED, RIGHT?
FEEL FREE TO USE
...!!
THE MEDICAL BOX AND THE FOOD
!!
THE ADULTS MAY NOT BE COMFORTABLE USING MY PLACE,
BUT IF YOU GUYS TAKE THE INITIATIVE, THEN...
I'M SURE EVERYONE IN THE VILLAGE WILL OPEN UP TO IT TOO.
BOTCHAN.

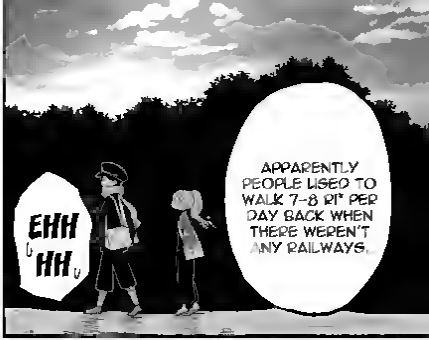
IF YOU KIDS CAN ALL PROMISE THAT YOU WILL STAY SAFE,
THEN I WILL TAKE RYO WITH ME.
TAMA-HIKO...
CAN YOU DO THAT?

ALRIGHT!! THEN I'M COUNTING ON YOU MR FUTURE MAYOR! TAKE CHARGE OF THE SITUATION!
YES, SIR!
WE CAN!!
I'M THE MAYOR'S SON— SO I'LL DO MY BEST!!
ALSO FOR RYO NEE-CHAN'S SAKE ♡

YEAH!
!
YOU GOTTA... YOU GOTTA COME BACK WITH YUZU NEE-CHAN NO MATTER WHAT!!
THANK YOU BOTCHAN!!

Y-
YEAH.
SHALL WE?
THANKS-
OYO NEE CHAN
SAFE TRIP-PPP
HAVE A
NEE-CHAN, GOOD LUCK-
HOW FAR ARE WE GOING TODAY?
AS MUCH AS WE CAN WALK TILL IT GETS TOO DARK
HOW ABOUT THE TRAIN?
I DO PLAN ON DROPPING BY THE STATION,
BUT JUDGING BY HOW YUZU ISN'T BACK YET, I'M GUESSING IT'S NOT OPERATING PROPERLY...
I SEE...





*TL NOTE: 1 RI = ~4 KM = 2.5 MILES

IT GOT TOO DARK AND WE COULDN'T EVEN SEE THE ROAD
AFTER WALKING ABOUT TWO KI,
FROM THERE, WE WALKED AS FAR AS WE CAN.
WE DECIDED TO REST IN A SMALL TEMPLE
IT'S A BIT WORN OUT, BUT SHOULD BE FINE FOR THE NIGHT.
I'M NOT OKAY.
BUT IT'S NOTHING IF IT'S FOR YUZU.
SAME AS YOU.
Phew~
I DIDN'T EXPECT A RICH BOY LIKE YOU WILL BE OKAY SLEEPING OUTSIDE

YOU TEND TO HAVE A SOFT SPOT FOR YOUR BROTHERS, BUT I FEEL LIKE YOU'RE ESPECIALLY ATTACHED TO RYOTARO
IF IT'S TO SEE RYOTARO, THIS IS NOTHING.
YOU ARE RIGHT.
SOME-THING PRE-CIOUS?
HELPED ME PROTECT SOMETHING PRECIOUS.
WELL, OF COURSE.
BECAUSE RYOTARO...
HE SAID IT'S A VERY IMPORTANT GUEST, SO BE NICE TO HIM
WHEN I WAS 16,
MY DAD TOLD ME TO GREET A GUEST WHO'S COMING OVER.
FEW YEARS AGO...

THAT PERSON BROUGHT A LOT OF GIFTS TO THE KIDS,
AND I WAS GRATEFUL TO SEE MY BROTHERS SO HAPPY,
SO I FIGURED HE WAS A NICE PERSON
SO I DID MY BEST TO TREAT HIM WELL
AND THEN
N-No ....
Stop ....
NOOOOO
ガタン

THAT I WAS SOLD OFF.
NOOO
STOPPP
THAT'S WHEN I FIRST REALIZED,
I'LL BE ABLE TO FEED MY HUNGRY BROTHERS BY ENDURING THIS MOMENT,
SHIVER
SHIVER
BUT WHEN I THOUGHT OF HOW
GET AWAY FROM MY NEE-CHAN, SHITTY OLD MAN!!
ARGH
...
RGH
ONEE-CHAN
ONEE-CHAN
I WAS ABLE TO GIVE UP.
Shake
Shake
!
ME MY SIDES...
R-RGH ...
BRR BRRR
BRR BRRR

RYOTARO!! WHAT ARE YOU DOING!
WE CAN'T GET FOOD IF WE DON'T HAVE THAT MONEY!
BAM
YOU CAN HAVE THE MONEY AND FOOD BACK, SO GET OUT!!
I'D RATHER STARVE TO DEATH!!
RYOTA-RO..
IF I HAVE TO EAT WITH MONEY EARNED FROM SELLING NEE-CHAN,
GRIPPPP
DON'T DO THIS NEE-CHAN
GETTING SOLD OFF FOR MONEY
WILL ONLY MAKE YOU UNHAPPY
THIS IS WRONG...
YOU ARE RIGHT...
THAT DAY, I SWORE I'LL HOLD HIM DEAR NO MATTER WHAT HAPPENS
MY PRECIOUS RYOTARO WHO SAVED MY CHASTITY

WOMEN WHO GET SOLD OFF WILL BE TREATED LIKE OBJECTS, AND THEY WON'T FIND HAPPINESS.
THAT'S HOW IT WAS SUPPOSE TO BE ...
BUT YUZU WHO WAS SOLD LOOKED H APPY.
AND TAMAHIKO WHO BOUGHT HER WAS TREATING HER WITH CARE.
EVEN THOUGH I WENT THROUGH SUCH PAIN, WHY DOES SHE GET TO...
I COULDN'T HOLD MY ANGER AND CAUSED HER TO SUFFER.
I'M THE WORST, RIGHT?
Rustle
Rustle
HERE
?!

EH...
THERE WERE SOME RICE YOU COOKED IN THE MORNING
IT WOULD BE A WASTE, RIGHT?
I MADE IT MYSELF.
WHAT IS THIS UGLY RICE BALL?
IT'S HUGE
GLOOMY

BUT ISN'T IT AMAZING THAT I WAS ABLE TO GET THE UMEBOSHI INSIDE?
HA HA
HUH? WHY WON'T IT BECOME A TRIANGLE?
ROLL
ROLL
THERE'S NOTHING I COULD DO ABOUT THE SHAPE. I HAD TO MAKE IT WITH ONE HAND.

Munch
Munch
Nibble Nibble
THANK YOU FOR THE MEAL~
WELL, GUESS I HAVE NOT MUCH CHOICE.
Stare
INSIDE? MORE LIKE SLAPPED ON THE SIDE.
.....

ARGH~
THIS IS SO BAD....
IT'S MAKING ME CRY.
PFF ...
ABOUT THIS RICE BALL ...
YUP.
UMM MM
Mumble
Mumble
IT'S BAD? YOU THINK SO...
OH~~
YEAH, IF IT'S YUZU
R-
REALLY?
SHE'LL DEFINITELY BE INTER-ESTED
MAKE SURE TO MAKE ONE FOR YUZU TOO